

# TOBACCO FACT SHEET

## Smoking In The Workplace

Cigarette smoking is the chief preventable cause of death and disability in the United States. One cigarette makes the heart beat 15 to 50 beats per minute faster than normal and raises blood pressure 10 to 20 points.

Environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) is also called second-hand smoke and is the third leading cause of preventable death and disability among non-smokers. ETS causes between 40,000 and 68,000 deaths among Americans each year with approximately 3,000 of those deaths being from lung cancer.



### Mississippi Facts

- In 2000, 75.1 percent of employers had official smoking policies.
- In 2000, 45.9 percent of employers did not accommodate smokers.
- In 2000, 17.7 percent of employers offered stop smoking programs.

### A Healthy People 2010 National Objective:

Increase to 100 percent the proportion of worksites with formal smoking policies limiting smoking to ventilated areas.

### The Facts

- Approximately 40,000 Americans die annually from heart and blood vessel disease related to exposure from environmental tobacco smoke.
- To protect non-smokers from environmental tobacco smoke, the workplace must be totally smoke-free or smoking must be limited to a separate, enclosed area with its own ventilation system.
- Worksite tobacco control policies contribute to employees' health status by
  - ✓ Reducing consumption of cigarettes among smokers.
  - ✓ Increasing attempts to quit.
  - ✓ Reducing or eliminating non-smokers' exposure to ETS.
  - ✓ Decreasing everyone's risk of exposure.
- Some reported advantages from organizations that have gone smoke-free are
  - ✓ A healthier work environment.
  - ✓ Higher productivity.
  - ✓ Substantial savings in insurance, healthcare costs, maintenance, etc.
  - ✓ Improved safety records.
  - ✓ Higher morale.

## The Risks

- Exposure to environmental tobacco smoke causes lung cancer the same as exposure to asbestos.
- Workers exposed to environmental tobacco smoke are at a higher risk than workers who are not exposed to ETS for:
  - ✓ Lung cancer
  - ✓ Heart attack
  - ✓ Stroke
  - ✓ High blood pressure
  - ✓ Higher levels of carbon monoxide in the blood
- Immediate consequences of ETS exposure:
  - ✓ Coughing
  - ✓ Headache
  - ✓ Irritated eyes
  - ✓ Irritated throat
  - ✓ Sneezing and nasal discharge
  - ✓ Nausea
  - ✓ Breathing problems
  - ✓ Increased heart rate

## What Can Be Done

- ✓ Conduct a survey to determine employees' attitudes.
- ✓ Request a pledge of support from top management.
- ✓ Request input and assistance of all employees in policy formulation.
- ✓ Emphasize the health issues during policy formulation.
- ✓ Develop a formal policy.
- ✓ Send every employee a copy of policy before effective date of implementation.
- ✓ Offer cessation classes.



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